



Childhood Connections

August 6, 2024

## Roads to Success

Throughout 2024, the Office of Childhood (OOC) will share “Roads to Success,” a collection of stories from professionals and higher education institutions. Stories from professionals feature achievements from people working in childhood programs such as home visiting, early intervention, child care, Head Start, preschool, and afterschool. Stories from higher education institutions highlight colleges and universities who are using innovative methods to support and grow the early childhood workforce. There are many roads to success. It is important to highlight the varying and unique pathways professionals take and how higher education programs can pave the way. These stories are also available at the bottom of the [Early Connections webpage](#).



Photo Credit: Sam Becker

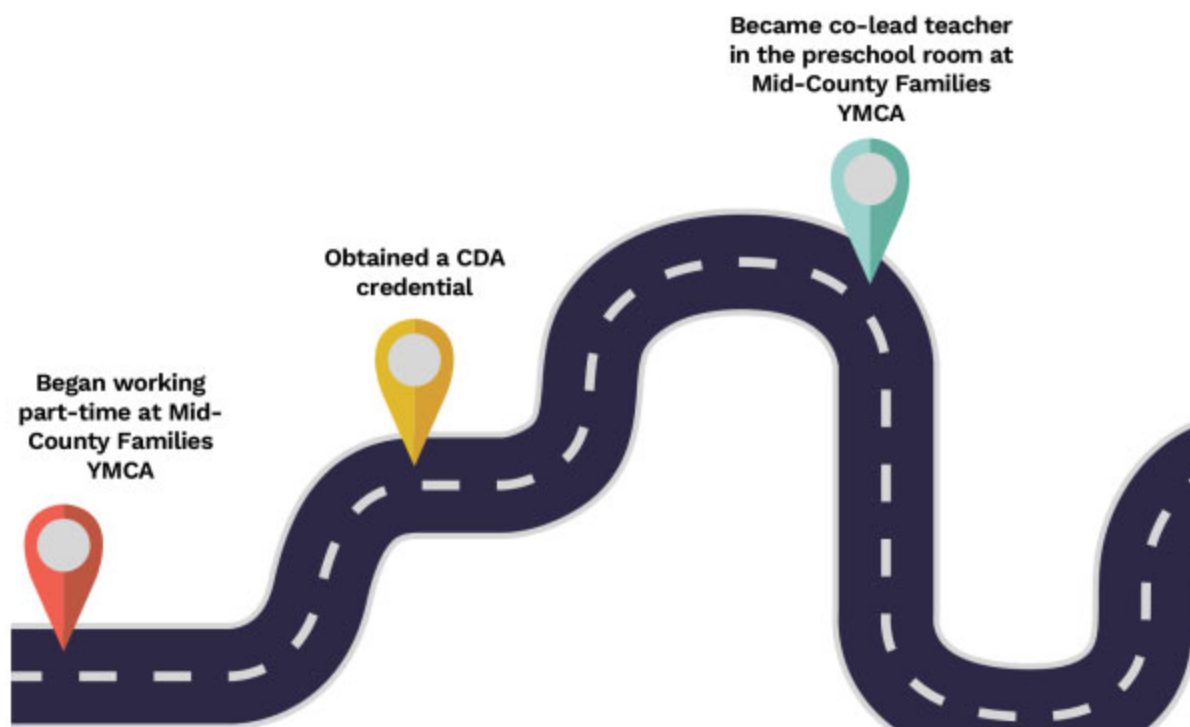
This month's Road to Success highlights Sam Becker, a lead teacher at the Mid-County Family YMCA in Brentwood. When he turned 18 and started job hunting, Sam wanted a job that was more than just a paycheck. Realizing he had always connected well with children, he noticed his local YMCA was hiring for a “child watch” role.

This position involved ensuring the safety of children for short periods of time while parents are in other parts of the facility. However, Sam quickly learned about an opening in the preschool classroom in the early learning center.

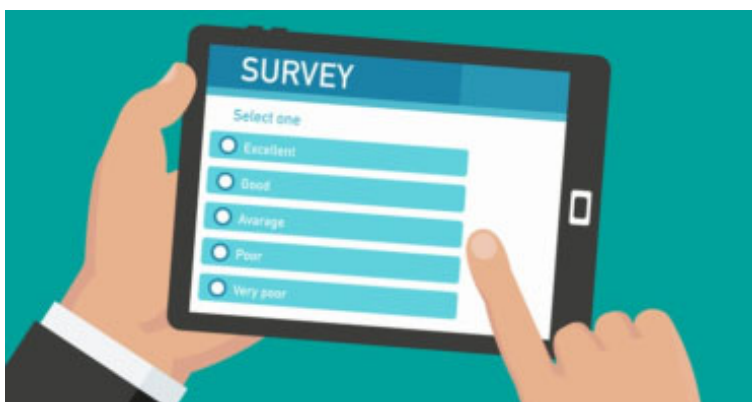
Sam began working part-time in the early learning center February 2022, and after nine months he began working full time. He then decided to pursue his Child Development Associate Certification (CDA). His employer offered a program that allowed him to be paid to earn the credential. Sam completed 120 clock hours of training online, which provided him the ability to move through the trainings at his own pace. On October 28, 2023, Sam obtained his CDA, with a focus on the preschool setting.

Sam is now a co-lead teacher in the 2-and-a-half to 3-year-old room and values the knowledge he has gained in his role. He enjoys experimenting with new teaching techniques and strategies to enhance his students' learning experience and improve his own skills as an educator.

## Here is what Sam's road to success looks like!



### REMINDER! Child Care Rule Weighted Risk Survey



As part of an initiative to develop and implement a licensing indicator system, the OOC Child Care Compliance and Regulation teams have developed a [Weighted Risk Survey \(WRS\)](#).

The survey will ask the respondent to assign a numerical value to each Missouri child care



### NEW! Child Care Subsidy Payment Calculation Information

To help address frequent questions about how a subsidy payment is calculated, OOC and its vendors developed [subsidy payment calculation information](#).

This document describes each step in the process used to make subsidy payments to contracted providers for subsidy-eligible children attending child care and

licensing rule that represents how much risk is posed to children if that rule is violated.

This survey is open now through **August 31, 2024**, to all licensed child care providers, advocacy groups, parents, and other childhood leaders. The survey is expected to take at least an hour to complete, when reviewing all rules.

If you would like to learn more about this project, please visit the [OOC Child Care webpage](#).

### NEW! 2024 Child Care Subsidy Rates

A rate increase went into effect for July service month and will be reflected in August payments. Rates increased from the 58th percentile for all subsidy-eligible children to the 100th percentile for infants/toddlers and the 65th percentile for preschoolers and school age children. Rates were established based on the 2022 market rate survey.

Most child care providers will see an increase in their rate; however, some programs will remain the same rate (e.g., hold harmless with no decrease in the rate) due to their current rate already being at or above the percentile.

Payments for attendance dates of service **on or after July 1, 2024**, will be paid at the increased rate in the August payments. [View the 2024 rates here](#).

Payments for attendance dates of service **prior to July 1, 2024**, will be paid at the 58th percentile. [View the 2023 rates here](#).

### NEW! Missouri Quality Prekindergarten (MOQPK) Grants Available

Another round of Missouri Quality Prekindergarten (MOQPK) Grants are available for local education agencies (LEAs) and child care programs to apply. MOQPK grant recipients must meet the quality standards in statute ([161.213 RSMo.](#)) and rule ([5 CSR 25 100-340](#)).

- Programs must serve children in the year prior to Kindergarten (age 4 by July 31, 2024).
- Classrooms must include children who are at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level.
- For LEAs, the program may be operated by the LEA, or the LEA may contract with another

includes examples that show how the calculation is applied to three scenarios.

### REMINDER! Trampoline Rule Requirements

For Licensed Child Care Providers.

During the summer months children are spending more time outdoors. This is a reminder that [child care rules](#) do not allow trampolines to be used in licensed child care settings and using other small jumping equipment (mini-trampolines, aerobic bouncers) requires close supervision. For more information, review these licensing rules:

[Family Home: 5 CSR 25-400.095 \(3\) \(J\)](#); and [Group Home/Center: 5 CSR 25-500.092 \(3\) \(J\)](#).

### REMINDER! T.E.A.C.H Scholarships Available

The T.E.A.C.H. Missouri Scholarships program is a scholarship and compensation opportunity for those who want to advance their early childhood career.

T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI is part of a nationwide effort to the increase quality of care in child care programs through increased education. There are several different scholarship models, including one for

LEA or with a private entity to serve eligible prekindergarten students.

- Learn more about the grant, including guidance and the application, on the [MOQPK webpage](#).
- Deadline to apply is **August 14, 2024, at 11:59 p.m.**

For questions, contact OOC Quality Programs – Preschool team at [Preschool@dese.mo.gov](mailto:Preschool@dese.mo.gov) or call 573-751-6793.

### **UPDATE! Quality Assurance Report Participants have Access to CDA at No Cost**

Early childhood centers, school district prekindergarten programs, and licensed family-child care providers interested in increasing the quality of their programs are eligible to join Missouri's Quality Assurance Report (QAR).

Participating programs receive Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) assessments, one-on-one coaching, access to quality support and resources, and fully funded training opportunities for staff who are interested in obtaining a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential for infant/toddler, preschool, or family child care.

This CDA opportunity for staff will fund the cost of training, materials, and application fee with two options available: CDA with CLASS with 9 Early Childhood Education college credits or CDA with CLASS with clock hours.

Visit the [QAR webpage](#) for more information.

### **NEW! Comprehensive Back-to-School Immunization Campaign Launches**

OOO's Child Care Health Consultation (CCHC) Program recently launched a project in collaboration with the Missouri Immunization Coalition funded by a grant received by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) to increase vaccination rates and confidence in vaccines for children under the age of 5 and cultivate safe and healthy learning environments in early childhood.

As part of this project, each Local Public Health Agency (LPHA) that provides CCHC Program services received a kit of five children's books that

home visitors, to assist those in a variety of stages in their early childhood career.

Learn more at the [Advance Your Child Care Career webpage](#).

### **UPDATE! Dolly Parton's Imagination Library**

An updated Dashboard and updated Active Child maps for the second quarter of 2024 can be found under Imagination Library Data on the [OOO Imagination Library webpage](#).

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is available for every child ages birth to 5 years in Missouri. A parent or guardian can register their child on the [Imagination Library national webpage](#). Books will be mailed directly to the home of registered children at no cost to the family.

### **UPDATE! Additional E-Learning Courses Available**

The OOC Training Library now has 30 e-learning courses available for child care professionals.

Free courses recently added include topics on Licensing Rules and Best Practices; Keep Calm, Keep Safe-Strategies for Reducing Stress and Managing Difficult Behaviors; and

discuss the topic of immunizations, five corresponding health promotion lesson plans, and a kit of four plush microbes (COVID-19, influenza, chicken pox, and measles) to introduce these topics to children enrolled in child care programs with fun and engaging methods.

Each lesson plan also contains a parent letter with helpful resources that discuss the importance of immunizations and where to go to keep their child up to date on their vaccines.

Read the [full article on the Missouri Immunization Coalition's webpage](#).

Learn more about the OOC's CCHC program and its availability across the state on the [CCHC webpage](#).

### **NEW! LEAD-K Parent Resources**

OOC is excited to announce the [Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids \(LEAD-K\) webpage](#) is live and located on the Early Connections webpage.

[House Bill \(HB\) 447, Section 161.396](#), established the Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids Program.

The purpose of the program is to promote kindergarten readiness to ensure children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing have a strong language foundation to be ready for school.

Missouri is working to assist families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing through the LEAD-K Act.

Find more resources on [milestones for American Sign Language \(ASL\) and English language and literacy milestones for children birth to 5 years of age](#).

### **UPDATE! Best Practices Trainings are Available**

Two new trainings about best practices are now available for a total of 5 and a half clock hour training credits.

The Best Practices in Family Engagement course focuses on five best practices that have been proven over time to increase support for children's

Caring for Vulnerable Children.

These courses issue clock hour credit immediately following successful completion.

Safe Sleep and Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Health and Safety Training are also available at no cost.

The remaining online courses have a \$5 fee. This fee is necessary to cover the cost of using an online Learning Management System (LMS).

To locate the Office of Childhood Training Library within MOPD, search training events and then type in DESE OOC for the sponsor's name.

### **UPDATE! MOPD System Information**

All Missouri Professional Development (MOPD) users who submit education records and/or credentials are assigned an Education Matrix level based on how their credentials fall on the Selected Occupations Chart. This chart describes jobs in the Early Childhood Education field and aligns with national standards.

Read more information at the [Missouri Professional](#)



learning at home, empower families, and improve family well-being. This training is two and a half clock hours, upon completion.

[Development System webpage.](#)

The Best Practices in Early Care and Education for Professionals and Programs training focuses on 12 best practices in early care and education programs determined over time to make the biggest difference for positive outcomes for children and families. This training is two and a half clock hours, upon completion.

Register for these trainings on the [Center for Excellence in Child Well Being webpage.](#)

### Spotlight on Success

Spotlight on Success aims to share stories from local programs that are building community partnerships in order to strengthen and coordinate childhood programs.



Photo Credit: Mary Martens - CAP Head Start

Partners in Buchanan County recently came together for a two-day training course, "Health Housing Principles and Assessment for Community Support Workers". This collaborative effort between Community Action Partnership's Community Support Workers, Head Start Family Support Specialists, Head Start Home Visitors, and the Buchanan County Children's Division Prevention Team

aimed to equip these partners with the knowledge and skills necessary to create healthy homes for families.

The training, led by Children's Mercy Kansas City and the Mid-America Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (MAPEHSU), focused on the crucial link between a home's environment and the health of its residents. Participants gained valuable insights into the eight principles of healthy housing and learned how to identify and address potential hazards.

The program fostered a dynamic learning environment through interactive exercises and skill-building activities. Participants engaged in discussions and participated in a simulated home assessment, solidifying their understanding of the practical application of the knowledge gained. Buchanan County participants learned about holistic approach, practical solutions, asthma management, communication, and education.

This collaborative training initiative highlights the commitment of various organizations in Buchanan County to ensure the health and well-being of families. By equipping professionals with the necessary tools to create healthy homes, this program lays the foundation for positive health outcomes for residents across the community.

Nichole Fuller, Family Support Specialist for Northside Head Start Center, said, "The training provided an opportunity for Community Action Partnership family service workers and the local children division staff to collaborate to gain knowledge on challenging conditions that can be present in the homes that can affect a family's quality of life. We work with families that could be at the most risk for such conditions and now with this knowledge we can help families to recognize concerns and navigate toward better living conditions."

### UPDATE! Preschool Development Grant



The Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5) provides funding over three years to coordinate a more effective, high-quality early childhood system that better prepares Missouri children for success.

Each month, the OOC hosts a live webinar to provide updates and information about the PDG B-5 to stakeholders. A [recording](#) and the [PowerPoint slides](#) from the July 2024 webinar are available in case you were unable to attend and wish to hear the information. You can view archived webinars here:

- [June 2024](#)
- [May 2024](#)
- [April 2024](#)
- [March 2024](#)
- [February 2024](#)
- [January 2024](#)

The [PDG B-5 dashboard](#) is also updated monthly. This dashboard provides an at-a-glance look at priority areas, budget status, and key accomplishments.

## PDG B-5 Monthly Webinar

Join us for the next PDG B-5 Stakeholder webinar on **Tuesday, August 20, 2024**, from noon to 12:45 p.m. to learn more and ask questions. You can [access the webinar](#) in a Google Chrome or Safari web browser. Do not view in Internet Explorer. We hope you can participate!

For questions about the stakeholder webinar series, or suggestions for topics in future webinars, email us at [Childhood@dese.mo.gov](mailto:Childhood@dese.mo.gov).

## Archived Editions of Childhood Connections

[Visit the OOC webpage to find previous editions of Childhood Connections.](#)

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